

We Claim:

- 5 1. An interactive fuel dispensing system comprising:
a plurality of fuel dispensers having at least one fueling position, each position
including a thin client comprising a dispenser controller, a display, an input device and a
browser running on said controller to provide an interactive graphical user interface;
a local server associated with a fuel station store including a server controller and
associated software to provide local services to each said thin client; and
each said thin client and said local server having network connections for
10 connecting to a network including remote servers, each said thin client adapted to access
local services from said local server and remote services from the remote servers by
manipulation of said graphical user interface.
- 15 2. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein certain of said services are
automatically accessed by said client.
3. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein certain said services are
accessed by said client when prompted by a customer.
- 20 4. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein each said thin client, said
local server and the remote servers use hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP).
- 25 5. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein said thin client and said
local server use hypertext mark-up language (HTML) software and hypertext transfer
protocol (HTTP) to provide interactivity and access to the local and remote services.
6. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein components of each said
thin client are hypertext mark-up language (HTML) compliant.
- 30 7. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein said local server includes a
link to a remote service provided by a remote server and said client is adapted to request

said remote service by accessing said local server, which in turn accesses said remote server via said link.

5 8. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein each said local server includes a plurality of links to one or more servers, which provide a plurality of services, said client being configured to access said local server, which provides said links to said remote servers, wherein addresses of said servers and services are not required at each said client.

10 9. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein said clients are configured to directly access once of the remote services provided by one of the remote servers.

15 10. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein said network is The Internet.

20 11. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein said dispenser controller operates said graphical user interface and facilitates interactivity with a customer to access the local and remote services, and computer intensive functions at each fueling position are provided as services from said local server or one of the remote servers on the network.

25 12. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein said dispenser controller provides interactivity at said client and relies on said local server and the remote servers to carry out computer intensive functions associated with the services.

30 13. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein said local services provided by said local server interactively facilitate one or more of the group of services consisting of point-of-sale functions, advertising, merchandising, ordering products, ordering services, ordering food, providing local information, audio intercom and video intercom.

14. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein said remote services provided by the remote servers interactively facilitate one or more of the group of services consisting of point-of-sale functions, advertising, merchandising, ordering products, ordering services, providing remote information, audio intercom and video intercom.

15. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein each said fueling position in one said fuel dispenser shares one dispenser controller with another fueling position in said fuel dispenser.

16. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein each said fueling position has a separate dispenser controller.

17. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein each said fueling position of each said fuel dispenser further includes a card reader for facilitating payment for products or services.

18. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 1 wherein each said fueling position of each said fuel dispenser further includes a microphone and speaker electronically associated with said controller and adapted to provide bi-directional voice communications between said fueling positions and a fuel station store via the network.

19. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 18 wherein said controller includes an audio signal processor and provides said bi-directional audio communications to said local server located in the fuel station store via the network.

20. The interactive fuel dispensing system of Claim 19 wherein each said fueling positions of each said fuel dispenser includes a camera and said local server includes a camera and display wherein video signals are transmitted between said fueling position and said local server to provide a video intercom via the network.

21. An interactive fuel dispensing system comprising:

a plurality of fuel dispensers having a controller and a plurality of fueling positions each having a display, an input device and a software browser operatively associated with said controller to form a graphical user interface at each fueling position,
5 each said graphical user interface being a client and connected to a network of remote servers;

a local server connected to the network and being one of the remote servers;
said local server adapted to provide local services to said clients when accessed;
each said client adapted to access said local server to receive the local services
10 and access at least one remote server in the network to receive remote services;

the local and remote services being selectable by a customer with said input device, accessed via said browser, received by said controller and displayed to the customer on said display; and

whereby the customer is provided an interface at one said fueling position capable
15 of interactively accessing local and remote services.

22. An interactive fuel dispensing system with Internet access comprising:

a plurality of fuel dispensers having multiple fueling positions, each fueling position being a thin client including a graphical user interface and a browser having a
20 connection to the Internet;

a local server located within a fuel station store and having a connection to the Internet;

said local server adapted to interactively provide local services to said clients through the Internet when accessed by one of said clients; and

25 each of said clients adapted to interactively request local services provided by said local server and remote services provided by remote servers on the Internet via said browser;

whereby the customer is provided an interface at the fueling position capable of interactively accessing local and remote services.

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23. An interactive fuel dispenser having Internet access comprising two fueling positions, each said position configured to act as a thin client and including a graphical user interface and a browser having a connection to the Internet, each said client adapted to interactively request local services provided by a local server in a fuel station store and remote services provided by at least one remote server, said graphical user interface providing a customer access to local or remote services as desired, whereby the customer is provided an interface at the fueling position capable of interactively accessing local and remote services.

24. An interactive multimedia fuel dispenser for providing multimedia application comprising a control system, a display, an input device and a network connection for connecting to a local server providing interactive services to provide a graphical user interface, said control system including a hypertext mark-up language (HTML) browser for accessing services provided by a local server connected to connected network using hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP).

25. The interactive multimedia dispenser of Claim 24 wherein said services provide for pump operation.

26. The interactive multimedia dispenser of Claim 24 wherein said services provide for display content.

27. The interactive multimedia dispenser of Claim 24 wherein said services provide for customer interactivity with one or more of the group consisting of point-of-sale functions, advertising, merchandising, ordering products, ordering services, ordering food, providing local information, audio intercom and video intercom.

28. The interactive multimedia dispenser of Claim 24 wherein said graphical user interface and browser are adapted to access services from a local server to provide interactive presentations to a customer.

29. A method of providing an interactive fueling operation comprising:

providing an interactive graphical user interface at a fueling position on a fuel dispenser;

displaying information to a customer at the graphical user interface from a server
5 spaced from the fuel dispenser, by delivery over a network;

prompting a customer to select a service with the displayed information;

receiving a response from the customer identifying a selected service to be provided by the server;

transferring the response from the dispenser to the server over the network; and
10 transmitting a service from the server over the network to the fueling position
based on the customer response at the fueling position.

30. The method of Claim 29 wherein the delivery transfer and transmission are over the Internet.

31. The method of Claim 29 wherein the information displayed is advertising information.

32. The method of Claim 29 wherein the information displayed is one of the group consisting of news, weather, sports, traffic updates and maps.

33. The method of Claim 29 wherein the information displayed is merchandising information providing the customer an opportunity to select from one or more items displayed.

34. The method of Claim 29 wherein the information displayed is live video information of a person communicating with the customer to provide a video intercom.

35. The method of Claim 29 further including using hypertext markup language and hypertext transfer protocol to carryout the step of displaying, prompting, receiving, transferring and providing.

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